

Crop manual Baselga RZ Yellow blocky pepper



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Let's review the winter one last time before we leave it behind.

In many areas we had colder outside temperatures. This meant higher pipe temperatures were used. Sometimes it also meant lower plant temperatures. This happened because of plant temperature radiation to the outside at night and increased plant transpiration during the day (cooling the head). In this situation, it was possible to produce large flowers and therefore shorter fruits.

For this reason it was necessary to take a close look at the actual plant temperature and how it might be different from the air temperature. Plant temperature might be 3 to 4+ C below the air temperature. So making your temperature settings according to what you see on the plant is even more important when the outside temperatures are lower. In this way, you will keep the overall growth speed high enough and help to keep the plant in balance.

In combination with high enough plant temperatures, the following tools help to produce good quality flowers:

- Use a large day/ night temperature differential. 5 or 6C is a good guideline (19/ 22 is not enough).
- Use the pipes that are close to the plants. So for example set the pipe rails at 55C minimum and the pipes up top at 45C. Go to a maximum of 65C with the pipe rails and then use the top pipes more when the pipe rails are at the maximum. This will avoid having a blanket of warm air above the crop (keeping the air temperature settings satisfied), while not having enough activation near the plants.
- High CO₂ levels.
- High EC levels.

For the coming period we advise to keep pruning the side shoot leaves right back to the stem (unless you know from experience that you need an extra leaf). Use the pruning to steer your plant. If the plants are too vegetative, you can prune the shoots up higher in the plant (sooner).

If too generative prune the shoots out later (lower) in the plant.

One advantage of Baselga is its production potential and this comes from its fast ripening speed. So it's important to keep the speed in the plant. Don't slow down too much with the temperature to attempt to hold onto setting fruits. It's better to keep the speed in, abort some fruits and move quickly to the next setting. In this way you will not sacrifice the production potential. Baselga is a relatively short plant, so some extra length in the plant doesn't matter too much.

If you have left some side shoot fruits to increase your fruit count, it's best not to leave any more from this time forward (unless your fruit count is unusually low). This will ensure that we can keep a large fruit size into the summer.

It's a challenging time of the year. There are still cold nights and the concern of plant temperature. Keep in mind that at this time of the year, cold nights will slow the growth, but will not lead to short fruits anymore. At the same time, there can be a lot of light during the day with low temperatures outside. This demands a lot of attention to proper humidity and temperature levels.

Therefore it's important that the plant is active during the day. Try to keep the vapour deficit above 3.5 in the daytime and not below 2.0 in the night. This is only possible when there is enough activity during the day. Stop dripping 2 hours before dark. It's better to give a night shot, than going into the night too wet. The growing points of the plant have to be dark before starting a pre-night. Ask yourself if it is necessary to give a pre-night. When you have over 1500 joules a day the average temperature can go up to 21 C+. Now you can make speed and still keep enough power in the plant. When the night temperature is high enough, the humidity won't be a problem. Make sure that your plant is strong enough so that you can keep the 24 hour average high.

For the coming period, fruit size is important. When the night temperature outside is going up, it's necessary to use a pre-night. Even if you don't reach it, the plant is cooling down as much as possible, so it will be easier to keep the fruit size. Aim to keep your fruit count below 35 pieces per m2.


Success in the coming period!

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More information

For more information you can contact our local advisor for greenhouse crops John DeVries by phone (519 324 6669) or e-mail (j.devries@rijkszwaan.com). Please also visit www.rijkszwaanusa.com



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